Chapter. 111

The Night the Cuckoo Sang

3月のライオン

March comes in like a lion

Chica Umino

Life is always

about the two choices of

'stand up' or 'sit down.'

If things would eventually be okay if I just didn't do anything, then that's what I did.

— But that concept is so simple, I knew it even when I was in elementary school.

So I searched desperately for a place it was okay for me to be.

I had to stand on my own two legs, I thought.

So I could live

even if it was all alone.

HAHAHA HAHAH!

BUGS, HUH?

MAN, THAT'S PRETTY MEAN!

WHOA.

WHAT?

WHAT'S GOING ON?

WHAT A SCARY FACE.

ARE YOU REALLY MAD NOW?

I REALLY DIDN'T HEAR ANYTHING EXCEPT THE PART ABOUT BUGS.

COULD YOU SAY THAT AGAIN FROM THE BEGINNING?

AH, SORRRY.

—WHAT WAS THAT EXACTLY?

So I

could get by without harming anyone.

YOU'RE ONLY

ANYTHING YOU HEAR JUST SKIMS ON THE SURFACE.

THINKING ABOUT HOW TO GET MY EMOTIONS JUMBLED, RIGHT?

.....

YOU'VE COMPLETELY STOPPED THINKING, HAVEN'T YOU?

YOU'RE WAITING FOR YOUR OPPONENT TO FLY INTO A RAGE AND SELF-DESTRUCT,

OR GET FED UP AND LOSE ALL WILL TO FIGHT.

BUT I'M USED TO THAT SORT OF THING FROM MY WORK.

SO AS LONG AS IT TAKES, I WON'T GIVE IN.

GRADUALLY STARTED USING FIRMER MEASURES.

BUT YOU ALSO

FROM COMING TO THE KAWAMOTO HOUSE.

HOW TO STOP YOU

I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT IT FOR QUITE SOME TIME NOW.

WHAT TO DO ANYMORE, EITHER.

.....

HONESTLY DON'T REALLY KNOW

AND I THINK THAT YOU

BY THE WAY, REGARDING ②,

UNFORTUNATELY, THE CHANCES OF THAT HAPPENING ARE ZERO.

② 'Have other people work hard and mooch off them.'

① 'Work hard myself.'

WELL,

I GUESS THERE'RE TWO CHOICES.

—— BUT

MIGHT HAVE GOTTEN A HOLD ON THEM,

YOUR SPECIALTY 'DON'T THINK ANYTHING JUST KEEP SPOUTING WORDS LIKE A MACHINE GUN'

AGAINST YOUR DAUGHTERS TO WHOM YOU ARE CONNECTED BY BLOOD,

—SO, WHILE IT FEELS QUITE STRANGE TO BE SAYING THIS

TO SOMEONE WHO'S LIVED OVER TWICE AS LONG AS I HAVE.....

A THOUSAND TIMES OVER AND OVER.

UNFORTU-NATELY, I'M A STRANGER.

SO I'LL BE BY THEIR SIDE SAYING 'NO, YOU ABSOLUTELY CANNOT DO WHAT THIS GUY SAYS!!' ——

SFX: KIRIN (TIDY)

That's just not an option.

—No.

I can't worry them.

HAVE YOU TRIED TALKING TO THEM?

YOUR PARENTS ARE ALIVE AND HEALTHY, AREN'T THEY?

SFX: KIRIRIN (TIDY)

That's just not in the cards.

—No.

I can't bother her parents.

THEN WHAT ABOUT TALKING TO YOUR WIFE'S PARENTS?

SFX: KIPPARI (PLAINLY)

I really don't wanna because they'll get mad at me!

I WANT TO MAKE THAT PERFECTLY CLEAR.

OUR PARENTS HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS.

I'M STILL A BIT WORRIED EVEN THOUGH YOU'VE GOT SUCH TIDY ANSWERS.

—— UH,

THEIR GRANDFATHER IS GOING TO BE RELEASED FROM THE HOSPITAL SOON, RIGHT?

BUT

BUT BASICALLY YOU DON'T WANT YOUR PARENTS TO FIND OUT 'BECAUSE YOU DON'T WANT THEM MAD AT YOU', RIGHT?

YOU'RE TRYING TO MAKE IT SOUND GOOD,

SO I STARTED WONDERING WHAT YOU WERE GOING TO DO THEN...?

—— AND THEN I REALIZED.

I REALIZED THAT, YEAH,

THIS PERSON IS PLANNING TO RUN OFF TO THE NEXT ONE...

SFX: GATAH

THEN I WILL, TOO. ☆

AAAH, I'M KINDA TIRED.

I'M GONNA GO HOME AND SLEEP. HALF THE STUFF YOU SAID WENT IN ONE EAR AND OUT THE OTHER.

MAYBE ...

OR MAYBE YOU'RE JUST WAY TOO EASY TO READ?

EVERYTHING YOU DO IS SO SIMPLE THERE ARE A TON OF PLACES THAT MAKE ME THINK 'NO WAY, REALLY?'...

—— HEY, ARE YOU... REALLY 19 YEARS OLD?

YOU SURE YOU'RE NOT A MIDDLE AGED MAN ON THE INSIDE?

Or perhaps an old lady?

Please pay at your seat!

THANK YOOOOU, COMING RIGHT UP!

Was trying to leave without paying

HMPH

SEPA-RATE CHECKS!

WE I HAVE THE CHECK, PLEAAASE ?!

EXCUSE MEEE!

—AND IF YOU TRY TO DRAG THIS ON ANY FURTHER,

WE'LL PROACTIVELY BRING THIS IN A MUCH MORE DIFFICULT DIRECTION.

SFX: GUU

THROUGH INTRODUCTIONS FROM THE SHOGI ASSOCIATION I GO TO POLICE OR BAR ASSOCIATION SHOGI CLUBS TO TEACH

I HAVE A LOT OF PEOPLE THERE I'M FRIENDLY WITH

SO I HAVE PLENTY OF STAMINA ON THE MONEY SIDE OF THINGS

—— AND FORTU-NATELY, I ALSO HAVE THE FUNDS TO PAY FOR IT.

SFX: GUU GUU

IT WON'T BE IN A FAMILY COURT WHERE WE MEET, IT'LL BE AT A REGULAR COURT.

SO WHEN THAT TIME COMES,

SFX: GJh . KARA KARAN

You really are

a piece of shit.

SFX: KARAN KARAN...

WHAT IS THAT SUPPOSED TO BE?

A THREAT?

ENOUGH THAT EVEN IF YOU WORKED NON-STOP STARTING NOW FOR THE ENTIRE REST OF YOUR LIFE, IT WOULDN'T BE ENOUGH

I'LL KEEP GOING WITH THIS AS LONG AS I HAVE TO

AND SAISHI SUTEO

GOING TO OSAKA AND COMING BACK, ALL WHILE DOING A DOUBLE HEADER WITH RAIDOU KIRYUU

I GUESS THAT'S WHAT I GET FROM WAKING UP AT 5AM

MY EYES ARE IRRI-TATED

WHAT?

HUH. ?

AH

AW MAN

THIS AIN'T GOOD

REI-CHAN?!

WHAT'S WRONG, HINA. ?

HUH?!

.....

SFX: BARARA BA'ATA BUROOOOO

SFX: KUU

SFX: KAA

WE WERE SUPPOSED TO STAY OVER AT AUNTIE'S HOUSE,

IT'S OKAY

BUT MOMO STARTED CRYING ABOUT WANTING TO GO HOME

SORRY

I NEVER WOULD'VE EXPECTED YOU TO COLLAPSE LIKE THAT

WHAT DID OUR DAD SAY?

AKARI-SAN, I

DON'T WANT

.....

SO OUR DAD . CAME, DID HE?

KIRIYAMA-KUN, THANK YOU I'M GLAD I DIDN'T LEAVE MY LITTLE SISTERS AT HOME .

—— BUT I'M GLAD WE CAME BACK

THAT GUY TO EVER.

COME NEAR THIS HOUSE AGAIN...

.....

REI-CHAN

SFX TOSA

LET'S ALL SLEEP HERE TODAY.

...HUH?

...

SFX: POHHH

GOOD NIGHT.

.....

and the smell of the garden rose up.

the sounds of insects

When Akari-san put out that little light

RI:

RI:RI:

RI:RI:

RI:RI:

RI:RI:

RI:RI:

was
like we That
were night
silently alone
floating

on a river
with no
waves.

Chapter 111 END

Senzaki Manabu's Lion Shogi Column
AN ARTICLE BY SENZAKI MANABU
4

REGARDING SHOGI HALLS

I was raised in a prototypical shogi hall. From my third year of elementary school for about a year and a half, a person named Ichige-san brought me to a shogi hall in Mito almost every day and the old men there taught me everything from the very basics.

Still, those old men back then were really loud. At first, I didn't play shogi with anyone that staid quiet. They would tease their opponents nonstop. If you checked someone, they called it the 'First check medicine'. If you put a fu on the piece stand, it was a 'lesser cuckoo of fu mountain.' When could take a piece but the piece wasn't a good piece to take it was, 'a fish dealer's cat not even worth catching'. It was a busy little place. Really, it was hard to tell at times if we were there to play shogi, or to compete to get the last word in. At night, they'd start drinking and playing games like mahjong. It's because I was trained in an environment like that that I'm who I am today. By the way, nowadays I don't heat those retorts anymore. Because now, I write these things on singing papers when I give autographs. Because among all that teasing, I believe that there is shogi culture that is rooted in the lives of common folk.

Those old men had a great saying, 'For sake, asecond stomach. For shogi, a second brain.' Essentially, that means that strength at shogi and general intelligence are completely different. Though, I guess he might've just been flaunting his success. Though I tell myself that phrase all the time.

Nowadays when I talk about shogi halls, it's pretty much about me going to do teaching matches. They're all pretty healthy. They've got quiet old men playing. .....They look a lot like the shogi association building's match rooms I wrote in column (1). It's possible that the shogi players that were loud during matches may have been connected to an amateur shogi world like the one I grew up in.

For beginners, shogi halls are scary places. People tend to have an image where if someone as careless as them goes in one, everyone will glare at them so they get too scared to even try. But leaving my old days aside, today's shogi halls rarely have that sort of thing. I'd say most are pretty kindly. However, well, there probably are still some around like the one from my old days. So maybe research what people are saying about a specific hall online before you go.

When I talk to people at shogi halls, I'm a bit tough on the kids, pretty soft on beginners, and with female beginners I ask them to please go soft on me. Right now, there are a lot of people with senses like mine, so I hope that you out there reading this column can drum up some courage and open the door to a shogi hall. And, without hesitating, (though I guess it's pretty hard to start out with) put all you have into the board and play some shogi. Those skillful old men really like seeing a beginner facing the board with enthusiasm. Even if you lose, it's really nothing to be worried about. After all, it's a 'separate brain'.